



Highlights of the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act

H.R. 1388, Senate-passed as of 3-26-2009

Reauthorizes and Expands the Mission of the Corporation for National and Community Service, by:

Increasing Opportunities for Americans of All Ages to Serve

- Puts young people onto a path of national service by establishing a Summer of Service program to provide \$500 education awards for rising 6th-12th graders, a Semester of Service program for high school students to engage in service-learning, and Youth Empowerment Zones for secondary students and out-of-school youth.
- Dramatically increases intensive service opportunities by setting AmeriCorps on a path from 75,000 positions annually to 250,000 by 2017, and focusing that service on education, health, clean energy, veterans, economic opportunity and other national priorities. Ties the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award to the maximum Pell Grant level (now \$5,350, but set to increase over time).
- Improves service options for experienced Americans by expanding age and income eligibility for Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions, authorizing a Silver Scholars program, under which individuals 55 and older who perform 350 hours of service receive a \$1,000 education award, and establishing Serve America Fellowships and Encore Fellowships allowing individuals to choose from among registered service sponsors where to perform service. Also permits individuals age 55 and older to transfer their education award to a child or grandchild.
- Enables millions of working Americans to serve by establishing a nationwide Call to Service Campaign and a September 11 national day of service, and investing in the nonprofit sector's capacity to recruit and manage volunteers.

Supporting Innovation and Strengthening the Nonprofit Sector

- Creates a Social Innovation Fund to expand proven initiatives and provide seed funding for experimental initiatives, leveraging Federal dollars to identify and grow ideas that are addressing our most intractable community problems.
- Establishes a Volunteer Generation Fund to award grants to states and nonprofits to recruit, manage, and support volunteers and strengthen the nation's volunteer infrastructure.
- Authorizes Nonprofit Capacity Building grants to provide organizational development assistance to small and mid-size nonprofit organizations.
- Creates a National Service Reserve Corps of former national service participants and veterans who will be trained to deploy, in coordination with FEMA, in the event of disasters.

Strengthening Management, Cost-Effectiveness, and Accountability

- Merges funding streams, expands the use of simplified, fixed amount grants, and gives the Corporation flexibility to consolidate application and reporting requirements. Increases support for State Commissions on national and community service. Bolsters the capacity and duties of the Corporation's Board of Directors.
- Ensures that programs receiving assistance under national service laws are continuously evaluated for effectiveness in achieving performance and cost goals.
- Introduces responsible and balanced competition to the RSVP program.
- Authorizes a Civic Health Assessment comprised of indicators relating to volunteering, voting, charitable giving, and interest in public service in order to evaluate and compare the civic health of communities.